

# **Absurdities of Hadiths And Muslims' Denial**

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There are two categories of Muslims: Those who accept the authenticity of the Quran and the Hadith with no ifs or buts, and those who deny the Hadith, partially or totally, and try to reinterpret the Quran in ways completely opposite to its apparent meaning so that it becomes acceptable to a reasonable mind.

For 1200 years, Bukhari's collection of hadiths was (and still is) regarded by the majority of the Muslims second only to Quran. Apart from the Quran, Muslims, especially the Sunnis, regard Hadithes as the source of guidance. The hadithes are stories of the life of Muhammad, collected by scholars in the second and third century after the Hijra. The most famous and revered ones are those of *Bukhari* and his student *Muslim*. They are called *Sahih* (correct, sound or authentic) because they went through a process of authentication called *Ilmul Hadith*. However, there is a new trend amongst some of the Muslims, especially *the submitters*, to deny the authenticity of hadithes all together. They would go so far as to call the eminent compilers of the hadithes liars and charlatans. The point is that these writers did not tell these stories to deserve such disparaging titles; they simply collected them and preserved them.

The early Muslim scholars accepted a hadith as *Sahih* only when its authenticity was established on the basis of both *Fann-i-Riwayat* (the art of sequence of narration) and *Fann-i-Darayat* (the art of logical concordance). Moreover, a Hadith should not have contradicted the Sunnah and the Quran. I am not interested and none of us is any more qualified to determine the methodology that was used for accepting or rejecting a Hadith based on Fann-i-Riwayat. These are old stories. All those who reported them died more than a thousand years ago and we have no way to verify their trustworthiness. At this moment, the only method left to determine the *sihhat* (soundness) of a Hadith is *Fann-i-Darayat* and its compatibility with the Quran. Asif Iftikhar writes, "Therefore, a Hadith can be regarded as a source of religious guidance only if the basis of that Hadith exists in the

*Quran or the Sunnah or the established principles of human nature and intellect. Moreover, it should not be contradictory to any of these bases” (from ‘The Authenticity of Hadith’)*

The same author writes, *“Imam Ibni Ali Jauzee is reported to have said: ‘If you find a Hadith against the dictates of common sense or contrary to a universal rule, consider it a fabrication; discussions about the trustworthiness of its narrators are needless. Similarly, such ahadith should be suspected as are beyond comprehension to the extent that they leave no room for any possible explanation. Also, a Hadith in which colossal recompense is promised for a minor deed, and a Hadith which is absurd in meaning are suspect’.”*

By examining some of the hadithes in the light of “common sense” and the recommendations of Ibni Ali Jauzee, we find many of them, despite being acknowledged as Sahih, do not qualify as such and can be rejected. Take the following Hadith for example:

Sahih Bukhari Volume 3, Book 43, Number 652: Narrated Abu Huraira: *Allah's Apostle said, ‘While a man was on the way, he found a thorny branch of a tree there on the way and removed it. Allah thanked him for that deed and forgave him’.*

Here it seems that the recompense outweighs the good deed and if we follow the sound advice of Ibni Ali Jauzee, we have to discard this Hadith as false. Well, this might seem something trivial, but the implication is immense. By proving that a hadith that has been categorized as sahih is not sahih, we establish that it is prudent to be suspicious of the authenticity of the rest of the hadithes classified as sahih. In fact, this proves that, despite the fact that 90% of the Muslims believe in *Bukhari* and in *Muslim*, and despite the fact that these books were regarded as the most infallible books of guidance after the Quran for the last 1200 years, those books are not trustworthy after all.

Now, let us take another Hadith and test it with common sense. Before that we have to define what we mean by common sense. [I](#)

have come to the conclusion that a simple thing like the common sense is not common at all and it may have different meaning for a religious person whose senses are flavored by his beliefs.

For example, the common sense dictates that men and women, generally speaking, are at the same level of intelligence. Of course, there are stupid people and intelligent people among both sexes, but this has nothing to do with their gender. No real serious scientific study, not marred by religious preconceptions, has ever demonstrated that there is any difference in intelligence between men and women. What has been found is that some part of the brain in women is more advanced than the same part in men's brain, while in other areas men are more advantageous. This difference is also evident in the comparison between the members of the same sex. Not all men are equal intellectually. Some are more intelligent than others. Yet all men are equal in front of the law. The testimony of Einstein and Joe Bloe in a court of law has the same weight. Unless Joe Bloe is a certified imbecile, his witness is as valid as that of Einstein.

There is no indication that women are less intelligent than men, and even if there was any, there is no justification for them to not have the same voice and rights in a court of law. Therefore science, justice and common sense all acknowledge that men and women should have the same rights. Religious sense on the other hand defies all that and presents its own criteria.

Baffling as it may be, some Muslim women are delighted to fight for their inequality and suppression of their rights and call it "liberation". They think that *hijab* elevates their statues. Being rebuked, punished and even beaten by their husbands is good for them. They believe that the majority of them will actually go to hell because Muhammad said so.

So when I talk about common sense, I am not talking about the sense of a religious fanatic. I am talking about the real genuine common sense that is supported by "real" science and approved by "real" scientists and philosophers. I put the word "real"

between quotation marks because all religions have made their own version of pseudo-science and have their own brand of pseudo-scientists and pseudo-philosophers. (I am referring to Maurice Bucaille and his kind)

Ok, let us get to the point and see if there is a Hadith that does not stand up to the challenge of the real common sense.

Sahih Bukhari, Volume 4, Book 54, Number 414: He (Muhammad) said, *"First of all, there was nothing but Allah, and (then He created His Throne). His throne was over the water, and He wrote everything in the Book (in the Heaven) and created the Heavens and the Earth..."*

How can this story make sense? If there was 'nothing', how could God have put His Throne over the water? Which water? What was holding that water? There must have been an earth to hold it. Then how is it that he creates the Earth after sitting on the water? How is it that the Heavens and Earth are created after the waters? Don't you need to have an earth to contain the water? And don't you have to have the heavens to hold the Earth? Beyond the fact that the whole notion expressed in this Hadith is ludicrous, there is also an error in the order of creation.

Now let us step back and consider what is wrong with this picture! Isn't the Earth a planet of the solar system, which is an insignificant part of a galaxy that is one of the billions of galaxies of the Universe? Can anyone (including the "genius" Maurice Bucaille, who said Quran is scientific and a miracle and yet refused to become a Muslim and rather was content with the money that the Saudi King gave him) put these two pictures together and solve this puzzle?

So we could say that the above Hadith is a fabrication because it contradicts the common sense and is contrary to the universal rule. Or can we?

The problem is that it is in conformity with the Quran and, as Asif Iftikhar said, *"a Hadith can be regarded as a source of*

*religious guidance only if the basis of that Hadith exists in the Quran or the Sunnah". What if we find something in Quran that corroborate the above concept? And lo and behold, there are more than one verse that does that. See the following for example:*

*Q.18:86 - Until, when he reached the setting of the sun, he found it set in a spring of murky water: Near it he found a People: We said: "O Zulqarnain! (thou hast authority,) either to punish them, or to treat them with kindness."*

*89 - Then followed he (another) way,*

*90 - Until, when he came to the rising of the sun, he found it rising on a people for whom We had provided no covering protection against the sun.*

Obviously Sun rises and sets in ALL places, or actually no place at all. One doesn't have to go "another way" to find it rising. This gives us the clue that **Muhammad really believed that the Earth is flat and the sun moves in the sky rising from one place, setting in another.**

But how can we be sure that this is how Muhammad thought of the shape of the Earth? The answer can be found in another Hadith.

Sahih Bukhari, Volume 4, Book 54, Number 421: Narrated Abu Dhar: The Prophet asked me at sunset, "Do you know where the sun goes (at the time of sunset)?" I replied, "Allah and His Apostle know better." He said, "It goes (i.e. travels) till it prostrates itself underneath the Throne and takes the permission to rise again, and it is permitted and then (a time will come when) it will be about to prostrate itself but its prostration will not be accepted, and it will ask permission to go on its course but it will not be permitted, but it will be ordered to return whence it has come and so it will rise in the west. And that is the interpretation of the Statement of Allah: "And the sun runs its fixed course for a term (decreed). That is The Decree of (Allah) The Exalted in Might, The All-Knowing." (Q. 6: 38)

Ok. Here we have a case in Hadith that is confirmed by the Quran, which is again ratified by another Hadith and once more demonstrated in the Quran. Is this Hadith against the science and common sense? It sure is. However, it is not against the Quran. Therefore, the message conveyed by the Hadith is wrong, despite the fact that it is an authenticated Hadith.

If we have any doubts about what Muhammad really thought of the shape of the Earth, we can safely put them to rest when we read the following verses.

Q. 78:6 - *Have We not made the earth as a wide expanse,*  
7 - *And the mountains as pegs?*

The “expanse” gives an idea of something flat. The Arabic word used in the Quran is *Mehad* (bed). All the beds that I have seen so far were flat. None of them were spherical. Also the mountains are not pegs keeping the earth from shaking as the prophet used to think.

Don’t these Hadithes, backed by these verses from the Quran, clearly describe a flat Earth, with the Sun rising from one end and setting in the muddy waters on the opposite end? Is there a Throne somewhere that the Sun goes under it to get permission? What Throne was Muhammad talking about? When and how does the Sun prostrate itself? This concept sounds ridiculous to us; yet in the old ages everyone believed in a flat Earth, floating on waters surrounded by high mountains beyond which one could fall into an abyss, etc. and the whole story made perfect sense to those who heard it.

In fact, this story is not an invention of Muhammad. Most of the Prophet’s stories were part of the folklore that he had heard somewhere else. In a book entitled ‘*The Oldest Stories in the Word*’, Theodor H. Gaster has compiled the lore of the Babylonian, the Hittite and the Canaanite people of 3500 years ago. These stories were lost for centuries and recently found and unearthed in the last century. They were deciphered and printed in

1952. The similarities of those old stories and the stories in the Quran, including the above Hadith, are astonishing. It helps us understand the origin of the Quran as well as that of the Bible. Quran has no divine origin. What Muhammad told people were stories he heard from others -- old stories that were part of the tradition of the people of his time.

## **Miracles**

There are also many hadithes attributing miracles to the prophet. What should we make of them? Again, as Asif Iftikhar indicated, 'a Hadith that is contradicted by the Quran cannot be trusted'. I suppose this is acceptable by all the Muslims. If there is a controversy between Hadith and Quran, the authority of Quran overrides the Hadith.

What does Quran say in respect of the Miracles? It categorically denies them.

So, according to the Quran, Muhammad did not perform any miracles and all those hadithes that report stories contrary to that are false. Their falsity also can be proven by logics. The eminent scholar Ali Dashti asked: *"If Muhammad could really perform miracles, make stones speak, split the moon, multiply the food, visit the hell and the heaven in a night, etc as some of the hadithes suggest, why did he not perform the logical and useful miracle and did not learn how to read and write?"*

Does it make sense that a man who can see the next world, when given a piece of written paper in his own language, is not able to read it? Muslims believe that Muhammad could look into one's eyes and read his mind. He himself claimed that when he led the congregational prayer he could see his followers behind him without turning. Yet he could not read a simple letter written in his own language? Among all the miracles that he performed, wasn't this the simplest and the most useful of all?

Apart from the Quran, there are many hadithes that also deny any supernatural power or knowledge attributed to Muhammad.



Sahih Bukhari, Volume 3, Book 43, Number 638: (The wife of the Prophet) Allah's Apostle heard some people quarreling at the door of his dwelling. He came out and said, "I AM ONLY A HUMAN BEING, and opponents come to me (to settle their problems); maybe someone amongst you can present his case more eloquently than the other, whereby I may consider him true and give a verdict in his favor. So, if I give the right of a Muslim to another by mistake, then it is really a portion of (Hell) Fire, he has the option to take or give up (before the Day of resurrection)."

How a man who is aware of this world and the next and who, as Muslims say, predicted all the inventions that have happened since and who is capable of splitting the moon and perform any miracle cannot trust his own judgment, fearing the eloquence of one party may deceive him and make him err?

Let us examine more hadithes with our own Fann-i-Darayat, unclogged from preconceived ideas.

Sahih Bukhari Volume 1, Book 6, Number 315: Narrated Anas bin Malik: The Prophet said, "At every womb Allah appoints an angel who says, 'O Lord! A drop of semen, O Lord! A clot. O Lord! A little lump of flesh.'" Then if Allah wishes (to complete) its creation, the angel asks, (O Lord!) Will it be a male or female, a wretched or a blessed, and how much will his provision be? And what will his age be?' So, all that is written while the child is still in the mother's womb."

This hadith resembles to a joke. Just the thought of this little angel that gets in there and stands in front of the womb each time a man become intimate with his wife watching the whole act and supplicating Allah for a drop of semen right on his face is hilarious. Shall we discard this Hadith as a fabrication? It certainly goes against our common sense. But wait a minute! This hadith was not against the common sense of those who used to narrate it to each other 1200 years ago. It does not make sense to us, but it made perfect sense to them. So, whose common sense is the standard? A few hundred years ago, the common sense

dictated that the Earth is flat. All the philosophers and prophets agreed. Today it doesn't? Can we say that these hadithes that go against our modern common sense are false now, but they were true then because they were in accordance with the common sense of the ancient folks?

The point is that we cannot dismiss the authenticity of a Hadith based on our common sense. **Today's Muslims have taken it for granted that Muhammad was the messenger of God and therefore he could not be wrong. So they reevaluate the hadithes as time goes by and keep discarding those that their new-found understanding of science proves unsound.** This method is highly biased. Of course, it is consistent with defendant's approach and his defense council who (if unscrupulous) would deliberately hide, deny or dismiss all the evidence that would incriminate their client and present only those that find him an alibi and are in his favor. On the other hand, an unbiased jury would weigh all the evidences, the good and the bad, and pass their verdict after taking into account all the facts.

To examine the truth of the claim of Muhammad, we have to decide which side we are standing. Are we part of the defense team or are we part of the jury? The majority of Muslims, as you would expect, choose to be part of the defense team. They are not interested to know whether Muhammad was right or he was an impostor. That question does not even arise in their minds. They already "know", for they were told that he was the messenger of God and they have accepted it as a fact. Choosing to remain in that position, they naturally would not know the truth and are not in a position to see it.

Today more educated Muslims find many absurdities in the hadithes and their first reaction is to deny them. However, since the majority of the hadithes are nonsensical, the growing consensus is to deny all the hadithes and vilify the unfortunate Bukhari and Muslim, who were revered for over a millennium.

This is unfair. Bukhari and Muslim, along with other Muhaditheen, did not invent these hadithes but recorded them as they were told. It is not right to shoot the messenger if the message is unpleasing. And it is highly unethical to defile these scholars and deny what they painstakingly collected because what they reported blemishes Muhammad. Some of these reports are fabricated and false, but many of them are true.

Because many of these hadithes are of dubious nature, we should not rely on them as religious source of guidance, but to dismiss them as historic source is committing a grave mistake. These hadithes are all we have about the life of the Prophet. They narrate the stories of the historic Muhammad. They should not be taken as a substitute to Quran (assuming that this is a revealed book), but they are the biography of the Prophet. If you deny all the hadithes, how can you prove the historicity of the Prophet? If all those stories are false and someone with a diabolic wit has forged all of them, then perhaps someone equally malignant has fabricated the Quran and the whole Islam is nothing but a fanciful tale. Without the Hadith, we know nothing of Muhammad, his life and his history. Without hadithes, Muslims have no way to know how to perform their prayers or fast. These are pillars of Islam.

### **The Absurdities of Quran:**

To deny the authenticity of the hadithes on the ground of their logical absurdity poses another yet bigger problem and that is: what to do with the equally absurd verses of the Quran? Can we dismiss the Quran as fabricated and forged because it is as absurd as the hadith? Certainly this is a line that a Muslim would never cross. So what would they do when confronted with Quranic verses that are absurd and nonsensical? The common reaction is to “reinterpret” the meanings of the verses and find some “esoteric” meanings for them.

The desire to interpret the Holy Scriptures and assign esoteric meanings to them is born out of the fact that these scriptures are

crude and lack meaning. The Shiites were the first to notice the inadequacy of the Quran and Sufism is entirely based on giving esoteric meanings to the revealed book. Sufism is, par excellence, the effort to 'interiorize' the Quranic revelation, to break away with the purely legalistic religion and experience the mystical significance of the encounter of Muhammad with Allah in the night of Mi'raj, which to the Sufis was also spiritual in nature. Imam Jafar Sadiq is reported to have said. *"Our cause is a secret (siir) within other secret - The secret of something that remains hidden - a secret that only another secret can reveal. It is a secret about a secret that is based on a secret"*. [Henri Corbin, *Historia de la Filosofia Siglo XXI* editors. V.3 p.253]

Apart from the fact that when you crack that sentence it becomes yet another absurdity, it also contradicts the Quran's repeated claims to be a "clear book" (5:15) "easy to understand" (44:58 , 54:22 , 54:32, 54:40) "explained in detail" (6:114), "conveyed clearly", (5:16, 10:15) and with "no doubt" in it (2:1). Nonetheless, it justifies the Imamate and Jafar's own *raison d'être* as an Imam. Of course, he had to convince the Shiites that Quran is a secret (siir) that needs to be interpreted. And no one could do that except someone vested with authority and Ismat (infallibility). Therefore, Imamate became a necessity for the Shiites. The question is: what would they do when there were no more Imams? Who would interpret the obtuse secrets of the Quran and the Shariat? That is when they came up with another institution called *Vilayat*.

Vali is the guardian of the Faith. He is the intermediary between the Imam Qayeb (hidden Imam) and the Ummah. Wherefrom does the Ayatollah Khomeini of Iran get his authority, whose rule overrides the decision of the entire nation? But who gave authority to the Imams and the valis? No one! These institutions have no backings from Quran. Few hadithes that support them are dubious and most likely were forged by the Shiites to justify their version of the religion.

The question is: why should God send a message of guidance to all the humanity in the form of a secret? What kind of prank is that? How much he wants to toy with us?

As we said somewhere else, there are two categories of Muslims. The first are those that defend Muhammad and whatever he did irrespective of any consideration for decency, rightness or justice. They do not deny him marrying with a 9-year-old child, assassinating his opponents, massacring up to 900 of his prisoners of war, performing genocide of the Jews of Arabia, raping his war captives, sleeping with the maids of his wives and other his less than admirable deeds. These are known as *Muslim fanatics*. The second group is those that deny all these facts about him and try to twist the evidence to make Muhammad acceptable to modern morality and values. These are called *moderate Muslims*.

I don't want to pass judgment, but I certainly admire the honesty of the first group, which the second group lacks. **Many so-called moderate Muslims try hard to hide the brutalities of the Quran and present it in a different light.** They would quote the earlier verses of Quran when Muhammad was weak and his preaching was sugary. But they would play down the harsher verses of the Quran that were "revealed" in Medina when the prophet was already a chieftain and did not need to humbug the Quraish, the Jews or the Christians for support.

Interpreting the Quran with a different meaning than its obvious one plays also a great role in explaining the scientific absurdities of that holy book. The majority of the Muslims prefer to live in denial. Denial of the authenticity of Hadith is easy, but to deny the authenticity of the Quran is not something they would like to think about. So reinterpretation is the only option.

### **The Submitters**

During the 1970s an Egyptian Muslim scholar came up with his brilliant solution that would entice many educated Muslims and renew their faith in Islam. His name was **Rashed Khalifa**. At

first, he claimed to have found the mathematical miracle of Quran. This claim was refuted by several thinkers as a "lie-free deception."

However, because of this claim he gained respect and fame amongst the Muslims, until he decided to start his own messenger business - a decision that angered the established clergy and finally cost him his life. But his contribution was important as by his complete denial of the Hadith and his serious effort to translate the Quran reinterpreting it in a way that would downplay its harsh and intolerant message, he started a new movement amongst the pseudo-intellectual Muslims who now could cling to the primitive Quran while pretend to promote a gentler Islam that does not advocate killing the apostates and instigating holy wars. Their denial of the hadith goes so far as denying everything about the history of Muhammad. They deny all his wars, all his assassinations, and the genocide that he committed against the Jews of Medina, his killings and his robberies. They deny that his sudden attacks at the merchant caravans were attacks but rather call them self-defense. They deny the age of Ayesha (who was only 9 when the prophet at 54 slept with her) and they deny Muhammad's licentious lifestyle reported in hundreds of stories narrated by his followers and preserved faithfully for posterity. Their zest to present the Quran as a modern logical book of miracles has made them bend every rule of reason to the extent that they would deliberately misrepresent the Quran and interpret it in the most absurd ways to rationalize its absurdity.

One submitter went as far as to assure me that the mistake in the addition of the inheritance in the Quran is not actually a mistake but a misunderstanding and that the share of  $\frac{1}{3}$  for the parents +  $\frac{2}{3}$  for the daughters +  $\frac{1}{8}$  for the wife that is commanded in the Quran equals one. He explained that the  $\frac{1}{8}$  share of the wife must come out of  $\frac{2}{3}$  of the daughters.

Quran doesn't say such thing, but the enthusiasm to justify the errors of the Quran goes beyond any rational thinking.

Those who deny the hadithes use these verses of Quran to prop up their claims.

Q. 12:111 *“In their history verily there is a lesson for men of understanding. It is no invented story but a confirmation of the existing (Scripture) and a detailed explanation of everything, and guidance and a mercy for folk who believe”.*

And

Q. 31:6 *“And of mankind is he who payeth for mere pastime of discourse, that he may mislead from Allah's way without knowledge, and maketh it the butt of mockery. For such there is a shameful doom”.*

As the above verses reveal, Muhammad was ridiculed by his contemporaries and his Quran was called “nonsense stories” and “idle tales”. The word ‘story or tale’ in Arabic is Hadith. So in these verses, he is defending his revelation arguing that it is not a tale (Hadith) invented or a frivolous discourse. He compares his words to the idle tales (hadithes) of the people of his time and claims that they will mislead men while the Quran guides them.

When Muhammad said these words, Bukhari, Muslim and other Hadith collectors were not yet born and there were no tales or hadiths about him. In the above verse, the prophet is rejecting the tales or hadithes of the unbelievers, not the stories of his own life that were not yet told. But since in referring to the idle stories of his contemporaries he used the word “Hadith”, which in Arabic means ‘story, tale or tradition’, the zealot deniers of the hadith have taken it as the proof that Muhammad was against the Hadith. What a confusion!